The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Brent Messer, at 5:40 P.M.

Present: Brent Messer, Michele Cripe, Susan Nelson Randolph Jones, Mikki McDougall, Jay Herron, Kenya Walker

Absent: Joyti Parmar, Norma Charles, Shelia Dickison, Roseanne Morse

Staff Present: Loretta Golden, Karon Walker, Tony Sarkees

Minutes read and approved no corrections.

Officers report – no information to report

Council members introduced themselves and welcomed new member Kenya Walker. Loretta advised, unfortunately, Cammie Cromie was not reappointed to the board, all expressed disappointment for the loss of Cammie as a council member as well as the energy and determination she brought to the council.

Mikki was congratulated for being nominated and selected to receive the 2008 Martha V. Varnes Award, given by The Gainesville Commission on The Status of Women. Mikki received the award at the 27 Annual Sexual Battery Task Force Conference, May 22, 2008.

Staff report- Loretta updated the council on new program initiatives and the use of funds raised by the Miller Foundation and council members: The program has purchased back packs that will be used to make “survivor kits” for sexual assault victims, the kits will consist of sweat pants, t-shirts, flip flops, and personal hygiene items. Loretta explained during the forensic exam the victim’s clothes are often taken as part of the evidence collection process. Program staff believes the donation of these items before the victim leaves the hospital will facilitate the beginning of the recovery process as well as diminish feelings of embarrassment, shame and humiliation.

Council members were apprised of the success of the many support groups offered by the program including MSORT, (Male Survivors of Rape Trauma) TLC (the teen group: Teaching, Learning, Caring) SORT (Survivors of Rape Trauma) and the latest group AMAC (Adults Molested as Children) Michele mentioned seeing a press release regarding the rape survivors Anthology created by the program. The facilitator, Rita Lawrence has offered the opportunity to any survivor in the community male and female to submit drawing and writings to be part of the Anthology and as a means to facilitate recovery through the catharsis of creative expression.

The Council was updated regarding program funding. The program has received and signed a contract with the Office of the Attorney General to receive $13,093.00 in General Revenue funds via the Florida Council Against Sexual Violence. The program has also been informed that it will receive $41,711.00 from the Rape Crisis Trust Fund. Loretta is in the process of developing a line item budget for these funds and submitting the contract for the manager’s signature. Susan asked if the program had received any information regarding possible cuts by the BoCC. Loretta advised she presented the program’s budget to the department financial team in April. To date there has been no discussion of possible cuts to the program. Loretta informed the council that although the program has a fairly large staff less than half are funded by the BoCC.

The County’s legal department has given the go ahead reference launching the My Space website. A memo will be written to the manager informing him of the site before the Public Information Office will be asked to launch a full campaign to advertise the site.

Members were informed of the final total from the benefit fund raiser. Michele suggested the council wait until a majority of members are present before there is a discussion regarding the fund raiser as an annual event.

Brent mentioned he is still in possession of the plaque that was purchased for management at the Gainesville Golf & County Club as a show of
appreciation and thank you for their support and assistance with the Miller Foundation benefit fundraiser. There was a brief discussion regarding how to best present the plaque at this late date and give the County Club public acknowledgement. A motion was made and seconded, Loretta will consult with Mark Sexton, from the Public Information Office to determine the best way to present the plaque.

New Business: Jay Herron discussed the Sexual Battery conference and his appreciation for the organizers effort to address some of the issues that are of concern to him. His contact with one of the keynote speakers, Sharon D'Eusanio has resulted in him possibly having the opportunity to write a letter or speak with US Senator Bill Nelson, regarding his concerns for veterans who are victims of sexual assault and the availability of accessible services and qualified counselors and therapists for them when they return home from the military. He asked if he had the council’s permission to mention he is a member of the Alachua County Victim Services & Rape Crisis Center Advisory Council. Brent assured him it is absolutely permissible to acknowledge his council membership as long as he makes it clear in his communications that he is not speaking for and/or on behalf of the council.

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 6:40 P.M.

Next meeting July 24, 2008, 218 SE 24 Street; 5:30 P.M.